Shri Ram Janmabhoomi

Historical Notes & Views

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This collection of historical notes and views of imminent scholars of history may serve proper understanding of the much discussed topic of Shri Ram Janmasthan and similar other sacred places of Hindu worship. Mosques standing on usurped precincts of temples are festering sore in the body of the nation. Muslims owe it to themselves and to the cause of emotional integration and national harmony to see reason and place such Masjids at the disposal of the Hindus for renovation and rejuvenation. Enlightened muslims, including learned theologians, are of opinion that Masjids Constructed upon usurped land do not possess sanctity of Masjid according to Shariat and God will not accept Namaz offered in such masjids.

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Babar demolished Rama Janmabhoomi Temple

Wajid Ali Shah's enquiry committee reported that there never had been a Masjid there

The Muslim rulers of India from 711 to 1858 AD with the exception of Khusrau Khan (1320) and Sur family of Sher Shah (1540-56) had all been foreigners. The foreign Muslims never treated the Indian Muslims as their equals. They thought that they alone had the right to rule in the name of Islam and the Indian Muslims had only to thank themselves for being ruled by their co-religionists. Muslim Rajputs, Muslim Jats, Muslim Gujjars and Pathans, etc. were discriminated against by the Arabs and the Turks. This was accepted by some and resented by others. In 1320, Khusrau, a Muslim Rajput convert, killed Mubarak Khilji and became the ruler of Delhi. Although he was a Muslim, a hue and cry was raised that Islam was in danger. There was a revolt led by Ghiasuddin Tughlak. Khusrau was killed for that and Ghiasuddin became Ghazi and ruler of Delhi (1321).

To amend matters, Firoz Tughlak (1351-88) abolished all distinctions between foreign and Indian Muslims. He was the first Muslim ruler of India in true sense of the term. All the former ones were Arabs or Turks Formerly, all Indians except the Brahmins were subject to Jiziya. Firoz abolished Jiziya on the Indian Muslims and imposed it on the Brahmins. He gave high posts to Indian Muslims and persecuted Hindus. This did not altogether snap the bond

between Hindus and Muslims. They stood as one against foreign invasions.

When Timur attacked India (1398 AD), he met great resistance from the combined forces of Hindus and Indian Muslims. Tenier writes in his autobiography that a combined force of Hindus and Muslims stoutly opposed him in Bhatner. When they saw no chance, both the Hindus and Muslims performed *Jauhar*. In Delhi, both the Hindus and Muslims gathered in the then Jama Masjid to face Timur. At Meerut, he met stiff joint opposition of Hindus and the Pathans. At Mubarakpur, on the bank of the Ganga, a force of 10,000 Hindus led by Mubarak Khan fought Timur while at Haridwar the Hindus were led by Malik Sheikh who died fighting.

There was stiff opposition in each and every village. The villagers Hindus and Muslims both-took to *Jauhar* and scorched earth policy. In order to break this formidable Hindu-Muslim unity, Timur generally left Muslims but killed each and every Hindu falling in his hands. He declared that no Sayyad, Sheikh or divine should be molested. He got one lakh Hindu prisoners brutally murdered when they felt jubilant and raised slogans that Timur had suffered a setback at the hands of Mahdi Khan.

Babri Masjid is symbol of foreign aggression

History repeated itself when Babar attacked India five times, and lastly in 1526. Hindus and Muslims united against the foreign aggressor. The story of Rana Sanga, Ibrahim Lodhi, the Rajputs and the Pathans, are too well known to be elaborated. It was to break this unity that Babar demolished Rama Janmabhoomi Temple. Thus

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Babri Masjid is a symbol of foreign aggression and exploitation of religion to break Hindu-Muslim unity.

It will not be out of place here to mention that *Nawab Wajid Ali Shah of Oudh declared it to be Rama Janmbhoomi Temple after a thorough enquiry.*

Thus writes Mufti Intzamullah Shahabi, a pro-Babari Masjid divine, in his book *Ulema-i-Haq aur Unki Mazlumiat* (Divines of Truth & their Tales of Persecution) :

> On 11 Ziqad, 1271 Hijri, Muslims went to offer Friday prayers at Babari Masjid. At the instigation of the Raja (Raja Darshan Singh) thousands of Bairagis fell upon the Muslims. The Shia officers were indifferent spectators to the whole sight. 130 Musiims got martyrdom. Ghulam Hussain also sacrificed his life. When the news reached Lucknow, it crated great agitation in the area. Maulvi Amir Ali Shah was much agitated and he came to Lucknow. He warned the government to take revenge upon the Bairagis lest he should declare *Jehad*. After waiting for some time, the Maulvi issued *fatwa* for *Jehad*. It was also signed by Maulvi Abdul Razak, Farangi Mahal. The whole city was agitated. When Wajid Ali Shah got the news he was confused but the officers consoled him. The Nawab sent his messengers to the Maulvi not to take any further step. The Nawab appointed Nawab Ahmad Ali Khan, Maulavi Ghulam Jeelani, Maulana Ghulam Imam Shahid, Maulana Fazal Haq Khairabadi, Sadrul Sadqor Lucknow Panch, and summ ned the Mahants who did not appear nor sent anyone on their behalf. The Nawab played another trick. He appointed Raja Nusrat Jung, Raja Man Singh, Qasim Jang, Tehwar Ali Khan, Risaldar Faizabad, to enquire into

the matter. They reported that there never had been a *masjid* there. The Nawab got it proclaimed. Amir Ali was beside himself with rage.

He wrote to Nawab in verse, requesting the latter to declare Jehad :

Zaban-e-faiz mubarik se Yun karen irshad
Ki Kafirat-e-Oudh par Shitab howey Jihad

(My plea to the gracious King is that he should proclaim a Jehad against the Kafirs of Oudh).

At this Maulavi Amir Ali Shah with his followers went for *Namaz* at Babari Masjid. Saadullah declared Amir Ali Shah a heretic, to be punished with death. Mufti Mohammed Yusuf Lucknowi declared that anybody siding with Amir Ali Shah would go to hell. 625 Muslims died as the result of firing by the military under Mr. Barlow. Maulavi Amir Ali Shah was also killed.

The story is corroborated by *Tarikh-i-Oudh* (History of Oudh) & *Auliyaye Hind* (The Divines of India) by Intzamullah Shahabi.

The Shias' Pro-Hindu Role in Rama Janmbhoomi Struggle

Nawab Wajid Ali Shah declared the disputed land to be Rama Janmbhoomi. The enquiry committee appointed by him was unanimous in holding that there had never been Masjid there. Maulavi Amir Ali Shah Amethi declared a *Jihad* against the Nawab and the Hindus and was killed on Feb. 10, 1856, alongwith a number of Sunni Muslims. The Shias either sided with the Nawab or remained indifferent.

Now Ahmadullah *alias* Maulavi Ahmad Shah took the lead. He came to Lucknow from Agra. In the meantime, Wajid Ali Shah was deposed. The Maulavi made very provocative speeches against Wajid Ali Shah, the British government and the Hindus. He went to Faizabad to take possession of Rama Janmbhoomi and declared *Jihad*. An armed eucounter took place. The Maulavi fell seriously wounded and was taken prisoner.

When the murtiny broke out in Oudh, the Maulavi along with others was freed from the jail. He led a war against the British. Another revolt, that too against the British, was raised by the Hindus and the Shias who installed Birjis Kadar, the son of Wajid Ali Shah, on the throne of Oudh. His mother Hazrat Mahal, Queen of Wajid Ali, became guardian regent as Birjis Kadar was only ten years old.

I give below some excerpts from 'East India Company Aur Baghi Ulema' (East India Company and Rebel Maulavis) by Intzamullah Shahabi :

"The martyrdom of Amir Ali Shah made the Sunnis the worst enemies of Wajid Ali Shah and his family. They hated the family from the core of their heart. They wanted Oudh to be ruled by a Sunni. So, seeing this state of mind of Lucknow, Maulavi Ahmad Shah became claimant to rule Oudh. He occupied half of Lucknow...Coins were struck in the name of Birjis Kadar...Maulavi Ahmadullah Shah Saheb who came with the rebels of Faizabad and had fought at a number of fronts. He was not only exerting his authority but also wanted to establish his rule. He had a court separate from that of Birjis Kadar. Both the courts along with political differences also reflected Shia-Sunni discord and prejudice In short, rivalry between the King (Birjis Kadar) and Sahib (Maulavi Amad Shah) was on the increase."

So, the revolt in Oudh was a house divided against itself. Hazrat Mahal and her Shias declared to build Ramajanmabhoomi Temple at the cost of the State. That attracted all the Hindus to her camp as also a few fair-minded Sunnis. The Maulavi had only fanatic Sunnis on his side. The result was that Hazrat Mahal was defeated as well as the Maulavi. Hazrat Mahal fled to Nepal and the Maulavi to Shahjahanpur where he was killed by the Hindu Raja of Pawayan.

There was a Hindu-Muslim riot on cow slaughter in Ahmedabad in 1716. A deputation of Muslims came to Delhi to complain against the Muslim subedar who sided with the Hindus. The Sunni and the Shia members of the deputation fell out among themselves over some religious matter. This led to a Shia-Sunni riot in Delhi. The Hindus sided with the Shias'.

One hopes that the Shias will keep their healthy tradition of fighting communalism and join Hindus to see the construction of Rama Janmabhoomi Temple as promised by Hazrat Mahal, the greetest Shia Indian lady since Nur Jahan,

(Courtsey Organiser Weekly 21.9.1986 & 12.7.1986)

Rajendra Prasad Jain

Rama Janm-bhumi Mandir

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

BY

Dr. K. S. LAL

Sri Rama Janma-Bhumi Mandir at Ayodhya is revered by the Hindus as a Temple of the birth-place of Lord Rama. But this place is known as Babri Masjid. The history of how this phenomenon has come about may be briefly traced here.

The Muslim invaders, conquerors and rulers of India made persistent endeavours to establish their cultural superiority by destroying Hindu cultural identity through converting its people to Islam, giving Muslim names to its cities and towns and changing its Temples into Mosques. But the vastness of the country coupled with the resistance of its large population rendered their task beyond accomplishment, and their efforts were destined to succeed only partially. Muhammad Bin Qasim invaded Sind in C. E. 712 and converted thouands of people to Islam, but when Muslim power in Sind declined, many of the Sindhi converts returned to Hinduism so that upto C. E. 1000 very few Muslims were found in Sind [1]. Similar was the situation in succeeding centuries all over India and despite persistent efforts towards Islamisation, the population of the country remained largely Hindu [2] Many cities and towns were given Muslim names. Agra was renamed Akbarabad, Mathura 'Islamabad' Mandu or Mandugarh as Shadiabad,

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1 For detailed references see K. S. Lal, Growth of Muslim Population in Medieval India, Delhi, 1973, pp. 99-100.

2 For copious references Ibid pp. 197-199.

Rajmahal as Akbar Nagar, Dhaka as Jahangirnagar, Satara-Azamtara, Delhi as Shahjahanabad to mention only a few.[1] But the original Hindu names could never be erased.

So was the case with Temples Whenever the Muslims found an opportunity, they converted Temples into Mosques. It was not only invaders who indulged in this vandalism during war; Muslim rulers also destroyed Hindu shrines or turned them into Mosques in peace times. There was no distinction between invaders and rulers in this regard because the law enjoined certain obligations on all good Muslims, and Temples continued to be converted into Mosques throughout the period of Muslim rule in India. Here only a few such cases may be referred to as a background to the study of the conversion and reconversion of Rama Janma-Bhumi Mandir.

The city of Delhi, then known as Qila-i-Rai Pithora, was occupied by Qutubuddin Aibak in 1191-92. Therein he built the Quvvat-ul-Islam Mosque. "Seen from within or without, the building, as originally designed, presented an essentially Hindu appearance. Half of the plinth on which it stood had actually been the basement of a Hindu Temple and the rest of the structure—walls, columns, capitals, architraves and ceilings—was composed of material stripped from the shrines of the unbelievers, twenty-seven of which, so one of the inscriptions informs us, had gone to making of this one Mosque."[2] Iltutmis and Alauddin Khilji extended the area of this Mosque, the latter added a magnificent entrance to it called the Alai Darwaza (14th century). The whole campus served as the Quvvatul-Islam or the Might of Islam in the early years of Muslim rule. Qutbuddin Aibak

1 Elliot & Dowson History of India, Vol VII, pp 163 195, 175, 367, 373.

2 John Marshall in The cambirdge History of India, III, p. 576,

also built the Arhaidin Ka Jhonpra at Ajmer which Iltutmis subsequently beautified with a screen. In style and construction, it closely resembles the Quvvat.ul-Islam Mosque of Delhi "Both Mosques were built out of the spoils of Hindu Temples "[1]

Somnath–

The Temple of Somnath in Gujarat was attacked and razed to the ground by Mahmud of Ghazni in 1026. It was rebuilt by Kumarpala (C.E. 1143-74) It was again sacked in 1299 by Ulugh Khan, the general of Sultan Allauddin Khilji. The Temple of Somnath was renowned througoout the Muslim world for its grandeur and wealth and was not only noticed by historians like Damishqi-Ibn Asir and Al Biruni but it has also been referred to by Shaikh Sadi in his poetical work *Bostan.*[2] Right through the years it continued on its chequered course of vicissitudes,[3] but the Hindus never ceased to worship there. Simllarly, Sultan Shamsuddin Iltutmis attached Ujjain in 1231-32, in the course of which he broke the famous Temple of Mahakal.[4] But after Iltutmis refurned to Delhi, it was rebuilt, to be attacked again by the Jalaluddin Khilji and Alauddin Khilji. But the Hindus recovered and renovated it and still worship there, The Temple as it exists today still has a stone wall of the Sultanate period, but it remains one of the greatest centres of Hindu pilgrimage.

To make the long story short, there are four categories of Temples

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1 John Marshali The Cambridge History of India III P. 391.

2 For detailed rererences see K. S. Lal, History of the Khilijis, pp 67-70, and footnotes 6-9, 15-17.

3 Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1943, p 73

4 For details see G. S. Ojha—Rajputana Ka Itihas, Vol I. pp. 201-203.

come down to us from the medieval times which bear an impress of Muslim contact. The first type is of those which have lost all Hindu connexion. Even Hindu names of these Temples are lost and the buildings now are only known as Quvvatul-Islam Mosque at Delhi or Arhai din Ka Jhonpra at Ajmer. The Second type is of those which still have a Hindu name, but their architecture has been thoroughly altered and they are counted as Muslim monuments like the Atala Devi Masjid at Jaunpur or the Lat Masjid at Dhar. (Lakshman Tila Mosque Lucknow). The third type comprises those in which original Hindu Temple or its altered type stands side by side with the Mosque built after its destruction like those at Mathura and Banaras, and Hindu worship and Muslim prayers go on side by side. The fourth kind of Temples are like those of Somnath in Gujarat or Mahakal at Ujjain. These were persistently attacked by Muslim invaders and rulers but the Hindus clung to them tenaciously, built and rebuilt them after every sack, and never gave up worshipping in these. The *Rama Janma-Bhumi Temple falls under this category*.

How did the Rama Janma-Bhumi Temple get the name of Babri Masjid ? Zahiruddin Muhammed Babur founded the Mughal empire in India in 1526. As a conqueror and ruler he embarked upon the policy of destroying Hindu Temples. One of his officers, Hindu beg, is said to have converted a Hindu Temple at Sambhal into a Mosque.[1] His Sardar Shaikh Zain, demolished many Hindu Temples at Chanderi when he occupied it. Babur also destroyed Jain idols at Urva near Gwalior.[2] He visited Ayodhya or passed through its vicinity in 1528. Ayodhya was a centre of pilgrimage for the Hindus as the birth-place

1 Archaeological Survey Report. XII. pp. 26-27.

2 Sri Ram Sharma, Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors, Bhmboy, 1992 P. 9.

of Lord Rama. As was customary with Muslim conquerors and rulers, Babur orderded the destruction of the Temple of Rama Janma-Bhumi, and erection of a Mosque in its stead. This, however, Babur does not mention in his memoins. The evidence for it is to be found in two inscriptions in Persian, one inside and the other outside thh Mosque.

Mrs. A. Beveridge, who translated the *Babur nama* from Turki into English, has rendered with precision both the inscriptions into English. Of these, the one inside the Mosque is important. It says, "By the command of Emporer Babur whose justice is an edifice reaching up to the very height of heavens, the good hearted Mir Baqi (of Tashkant) built this alighting-place of angels May this goodness last for ever." In a foonote, Mrs. Beveridge adds, *"Presumably the order for bnilding the Mosque was given during Babur's stay in Aud (Ayodhya) in 934 AH. at which time he would have been impressed by the dignity and sanctity of the ancient Hindu shrine. He* (at least in part) *displaced it; like the obedient follower of Muhammad he was intolerant of another faith and would regard the substitution of a Temple by a Mosque as dutiful and worthy act. The Mosque was finished in 935 A.H. but no mention of its completion is in the* Babur Nama. *The diary for A H. has many minor* lacunae; that of the year 934 A.H. *has lost much matter, breaking off before where the account of Aud might be looked for."* [1]

In the District Gazetteer of Faizabad (p. 173), H. E. Nevill also says, "In 1528 A. D. Babur came to Ayodhya (Aud) and halted a week. He destroyed the ancient Temple (marking the birth-place of Rama) and on its site built a Mosque, still known as Babur Mosque...It has

1 Babur Nama, Appendix U, pp. lxxvi:-lxxix n. 1.

two inscriptions, one on the outside, one on the pulpit; both are in Persian; and bear the date 935 A.H.[1]

Besides the inscriptions the edifice itself bears witness to the conversion of the Temple of Rama Janma-Bhumi into a Masjid. It is clear that the stones used in the Mosque originally belonged to the Hindu Temple. True, there is superimposition of domes and though domes are considered an important part of Islamic construction design, they are not unfamiliar to Hindu architecture. But the most important omission is minarates. No Mosque is considered complete without minarates, exception being those constructed in the very early years of Islam. Without any provision for a place for Azan, it is doubtful if the shrine was ever used as a Mosque. *The conversion of the Temple is meant as usual only to be an exhibition of the power of the conqueror.* The Hindus on their part never gave up claim to their shrine and the right of worshipping in it in times favourable and not so favourable. Such sort of times depended upon the attitude and temperament of succeeding Muslim rulers. In the time of Akbar, no obstacles were put in the performance of Hindu worship and in Ayodhya the Temple was rebuilt on a small platform. Under Aurangzeb, the platform and the Temple were razed to the ground. But Manucci found that Hindu Temples at Hardwar and Ayodhya were thronged with worshippers. "Even those that are destroyed are still venerated by the Hindus and visited by the offering of alms", writes he regarding the Temple of Ayodhya.[2] UNDER WAJID ALI SHAH, HINDU WORSHIP WAS AGAIN REVIVED IN FULL FORCE.

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1 Babur Nama, p. 656 n.

Also see Banerjee, "Babur and the Hindus" in Journal of the U. P. Historical Society Allahabad, 1936.

2 Niccolao Manucci, Storia do Mogor. 4 Vols. (London, 1907), Vol III, pp. 244-45.

This situation naturally posed problems for British administrators and they found it convenient to play one community against the other. During the uprising of 1857, the Hindus and Muslims worked together against the British. One of the Muslim leaders Amir Ali pleaded on behalf of the Hindus for the restoration of the Rama Janma-Bhumi to them on the ground that it was originally a Hindu shrine. But he along with the Hindu leader Baba Ram Charan Das were hanged.[1] Later the Hindus were denied their right of worshipping in the Temple. Against this a suit was filed on January 19, 1885 in which it was stated that earlier in May 1883, the Deputy Commissioner of Faizabad, had prohibited the construction of any Temple on the basis of objections raised by some Muslims. As if the historical controversy confused by fact and fiction was not bad enough, the legal aspect only helped complicate the issue. District Judge of Faizabad, Col. J. E. A Chambier delivered the judgement on March 26, 1886 primarily to preserve the peace, adding. "It is most unfortunate that a Masjid should have been built on the land especially held sacred by the Hindus. But as that occured 356 years ago, it is too late now to remedy the grievance." The judicial commissioner W. Young supported Chambier but denouncing in still stronger terms "the bigotry and tyranny of the emperor who purposely chose this holy spot" as site of the Mosque. But he recognised the fact that the Hindus had not renounced worshipping at their Temple or whatever place they could get access to in the complex. Babur was a Sunni and Faizabad was for long under Shia rule under the Nawabs of Avadh. While Babur suppressed Hindu worship at Rama Janma-Bhumi Temple by converting into a Mosque, Nawab Wajid Ali Shah had

1 Sultanpur Gazetteer, p. 36.

conceded this right to the Hindus. Historically speaking there is a Shia-Sunni dimension to the problem also, and any change in the Rama Janma-Bhumi Temple may harden Shia-Sunni attitudes. Above everything else is the fact that as in the Temples of Somnath and Mahakal, the Hindus have never given up worshipping at the Temple of Rama Janma Bhumi. Thousands in the past have sacrificed their lives for its protection, for the Temple has a special place in Hindu psyche being the birth-place of their most revered Lord Rama.

Around every important Hindu Temple, be it Somnath in Gujarat, Meenakshi at Madurai or Rama Janma-Bhumi at Ayodhya, lively economic activity goes on in which people of both the communities—Hindu and Muslim—are participants and beneficiaries. Similar is the case with regard to the Dargahs of Moinuddin Chisti at Ajmer and Nizamuddin Aulia at Delhi. It would be the best to leave the people of these places to live in peace. Any instigation by fundamentalist statements leading to disturbances would be an act of the greatest disservice to the people of Ayodhya.

SOME REFERENCES ABOUT AJUDHYA AND RAMA JANMASTHANA

(I) Report–Settlement of the Land Revenue Faizabad District by A.F. Mettell (Allahabad 1880)

pp. 216-217

Para 611—*Ajudhya*

Which is to the Hindus what Mecca is to the Mohammedans, Jerusalem to Jews, has in the tradition of the orthodox a highly mythical origin, being founded for additional security not on the

earth, for that is transitory, but on the Chariot–Wheel of the Great Creator himseif which will endure for ever.

Para 613—*Derivation*

The name Ayodhya is explained by well-known local pundits to be derived from the Sanskrit words—Ajud,
also *Aj*, a name of Brahma, the unconquerable city of the Creator.........

Para 618—*Ramkot*

The most remarkable was Ramkot that is the stronghold of Ramachandra—surrounded by 20 bastions—
1. Hauuman Garhi, 2. Sugreev, 3. Angad, 4. Dibadh, 5. Nal, 6. Nil, 7. Sushen, 8. Kuber, 9. Gwachh, 10. Dadh Biktar, 11. Kuleswar, and Abidh Bhawan, Mayan, Bakbandh, Surumbha, Bibbishan, Pindark, Matsya-Gajendra, Jamwant, Kesri—

and 8 Royal Mansions—

1. Ratna Singhashanasthan (throne room), 2. Kaushalya Mandir, 3. Sumitra Mandir, 4. Kaikeyi Bhawan, 5. Janmsthan, 6. Nowratan (Assembly room), 7. Sabha Mandir (Court Lounge) 8. Kanak Bhawan (Sita).

Para 619—Sir H. Elliot mentions that Vikramaditya erected Temples at 360 places rendered sacred by association with Rama. Of these 42 are known to the present generation and as there are but few things that are really old to be seen Ajudhya, most of these must be of comparativeiy recent restoration.

There are numerous Thakurdwars built by different nobles and six Mandirs of Jain faith.

pp. 220-221

Para 626—The Sarju—

627—The Ajudhya Mahatmya—a great work which glorified Ajudhya—founded by Ikshaku of the Solar race.

p. 234

Para 666 —*The Janmasthan and other Temples*

It is locally affirmed that at the Mohammden conquest there were three important *Hindu Shrines*, with but few devotees attached at Ajudhya which was then little other than a wilderness. These were The *Janmasthan*, the *Swargadwar Mandir* also known as 'Ram Darabar' and 'Taretv-Ke-Thakur'. On the first of these the Emporer Babur built the Mosque which still bears his name A.D. 1528; on the second Aurangzeb did the same.. A.D. 1658–1707 and on the third that sovereign or his predecessor, built a Mosque according to this well-known Mohammaden principle of enforcing their religion on all those whom they conquered. The Janmasthan marks the place where Ramachandra, was born. The Swargadwar is the gate through which he passed into Paradise, possibly the spot where his body was burried. The Tareta-Ke-Thakur was famous as the place place where Rama performed a great sacrifice and which he commemorated by setting up there images of himself and Sita.

Report—p. 235, Para 667—*Babur Mosque*

According to Leyden's memoirs of Babur

According to Leyden's memoirs of Babur, the emporer encamped at the confluence of Saryu and Gagra rivers, two or three Kms. from Ajudhya on the 28th March 1528 and there be halted seven or eight days settling the surrounding country. A well-known hunting ground

is spoken of in that work, 7 or 8 Kms. above Oudh, on the banks of Sarju. It is remarkable that in all the copies of Babur's life now known the pages that relate to his doings at Ajudhya are wanting. In two places in the Babri Mosque the year in which it was built, 935 H, corresponding with 1528 A. D., is carved in stone, along with inscriptions dedicated to the glory of that emporer.

pp. 235, Para 668—If Ajudhya was then little other than wild, it must at least have possessed a fine temple in the Janmasthan, for many of its columns are still in existence and in good preservation having been chosen by Mussalmans in construction, in the Babri Mosque. These are of strong close-grained dark slate-coloured or black stone called by the natives '*Kasoti*' and carved with different devices.

Para 669—*Hindu and Mussalman difference* :—The Janmasthan is within a few hundred paces of the Hanuman Garhi. In 1855, when a great rupture took place between the Hindus and Mohammedans, the former occupied the Hanuman Garhi in force, while the Mussalmans took possession of Janmasthan. The Mohammedans on that occasion aetually charged up the steps of the Hanuman Garhi, but were driven back with considerable loss. The Hindus then followed up this success, and at the third attempt took the Janmasthan, at the gate of which 75 Mohammedans are buried in the 'Martyrs' grave (Ganj-Shahidan). Several of the King's regiments were looking on all the time, but their orders were not to interfere. It is said that upto that time the Hindus and Mohammendans alike used to worship in the Mosque-Temple. Since British rule a railing has been put to prevent disputes, within which in the Mosque the Mohammendans pray while outside the fence the Hindus have raised a platform on which they make their offerings.

pp. 238, para 670—The two other old Mosques to which allusion has been made (known by the common people by the name of Naurang Shah, by which they mean Aurangzeb), are now mere picturesque ruins. Nothing has been done by the Hindus to restore the old Mandir of "Ram Darbar", "Tareta-Ke-Thakur" was reproduced near the old ruin by the Raja of Kulu whose estate is said to be in the Punjab, more then 2 centuries ago; and it was improved upon afterwards by *Hillo Rai Marathin* who also built the adjoining ghat A.D. 1784. She was the widow of Jaswant Rao Holkar of Indore, from which family Rs. 231/- are still annually received at this shrine.

(II) H.R. Nevill, *A Gazetteer—District Bara Banki Vol. XLVIII* 1904 (Allahabad).

pp. 169 — Shortly before annexation an incident occured in this District, which may well be recorded as illustrative of the state of anarchy that then prevailed.

That event happened in 1853. The cause of the occurence was one of the numerous disputes that have sprung up from time to time between the Hindu priests and the Musalmans of Ayodhya with regard to the ground on which formerly stood the Janmasthan Temple, which was destroyed by Babur and replaced by a Mosque. Other Mosques had been built by Aurangzeb and others and some of them had fallen into decay. The ground being peculiarly sacred to the Hindus, was at once seized by the Bairagis and others, thus affording a fertile source of friction. According to the "Pioneer" (20th June 1902) account, one of the Mahents (a Muslim) spread the news that the Hindus had *destroyed the Mosque.* At all events, the prime mover in the business was one Maulavi Amir Ali, a resident of

Amethi in Lucknow and a well-known Faquir. The man at once proceeded to proclaim a Jihad in the city and was...assisted by the King (Nawab of Audh-Lucknow). The latter sent orders to Faizabad to enquire into the matter, but nothing was done. There upon the Maulavi returned to Amethi and collected a large and well-armed force of Mohammedans. Hearing-the King deputed Bashir-ud-daula of Amethi and summoned the Maulavi to Lucknow. Knowing the danger of allowing any religious disturbance to come to a head the king openly proclaimed that no violent action should be taken, but that the mosque in question should be restored. —Finding that no action was being taken he (Amir Ali) marched with his force to Bansa (Tomb of Abdul Razzaq), where he collected more men—The king then summonned Sir James Outram the resident, and left it to him to put a stop to the movement in any way he could.

p. 170—*Its suppression*

Consequently an order was sent express to the Nawab of Faizabad, who despatched a large force to Bansa. Amir Ali, however, remained obdurate—wanted to destroy the Hanuman Garhi.

Col. Barlow marched against him with the First Regiment of Oudh Irregular Infantry-assisted by *Rai Abhciram Bali of Rampur, Sher Bahadur Singh* of Kamiar, and *Thakur Singh* with their sepoys. The Musalman gunmen did not perform their duty out of sympathy with the Maulavi. However, the Colonel worked the gun himself and Amir Ali was killed along with 120 to 700 men in the field.

The kingdom of Oudh was annexed in Feb. 1856.

Other References on Ayodhya

(Ref. III) Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal Vol. XLIV Part I (History and Antiquities) etc.

Calcutta 1875

Translation of the Ayodhya Mahatmya or Pilgrimage of Ayodhya, by Ram Narayan of Bareli College.

pp. 130–173 **Chapter XXX**

Extract from the Archeological Survey of INDIA published by the Government of INDIA in the year 1889

Chapter X **Ayodhya, Bhuila Tal and Sahet Mahet — Ayodhya.**

—Babar's Masjid at Ayodhya was built in A.H. 935 or A.D. 1528 by Mir Khan on the very spot where the old temple Janmasthanam of Ram Chandra was standing.

Keeping Hindus in Abasement

The basic tenets of Islam are expounded in Koran and Hadis which are in Arabic. Ulemas interpreted them for the benefit of the kings and the general muslim society. Out of four learned jurists of Islam—Hambli, Shafi, Malki and Hanifa, only the last one ordained that Hindus can be allowed to live under muslim rule the life of 'Zimmi' on payment of Jizia (poll tax). According to the great saint Swami Vivekanand.

"..........To the musalman, the Jews or the Christians are not objects of extreme detestation; they are at the worst men of little faith, but not so the Hindu. According to him Hindu is idolatorous, the hateful Kafir, hence in this life he deserves to be butchered and in the next eternal hell is in store for him. The utmost musalman kings could do as a favour to the priestly class was to allow them somehow to pass their life silently and wait for the last moment. This was again sometimes considered too much kindness. If the Religious ardour of any king was a little more uncommon there would immediately follow arrangements for a great Yajna by way of Kafir slaughter." (Swamiji's Works-Advait Ashram, Calcutta).

In Hindusthan Ulemas devised a set of rules ensuring constant humiliation of Hindus. All sorts of insults and indignities were heaped upon them. Desecration and demolition of temples was one of them. The destruction was so planned that some portion of the

former temple edifice was left as an exhibit of religious merit of Islam of their conception. A brief look at Ram Janmbhomi Temple in Ayodhya, Vishwanath Temple in Kashi and Krishna Janmasthan (Mathura) will convince any impartial observer that the intention of this vandalism was to terrorise the Hindus and insult their way of worship. Some typical examples of what the Qazis and Ulemas of Islam preached and propogated as the Religious duties of a Muslim ruler are given here.

Sheikh Nuruddin Mubarak Ghazanvi was a Sufi saint. In the reign of Iltutmish he propounded the duties of a muslim king "...........but if total uprooting of idolatory is not possible owing to firm roots of Kufr and the large number of Kafirs and mushriks (As Hindus in Hindusthan) the king should at least strive to insult, dis-grace, dishonour and defame the 'Mushrik' and idol worshipping Hindus who are the worst enemies of God and the prophet. The symptom of the king being the protector of the religion is this—when they see a Hindu their eyes grow red as if they wish to bury him alive.

They are also desired to completely uproot the Brahmins who are the leaders of Kufr and 'Shirk' and owing to whom Kufr and Shirk are spread and the commandments af 'Kufr' are enforced xxx Owing to fear and terror of the kings of Islam not a single enemy of God and the Prophet can drink water that is sweet or stretch his legs in his bed and go to sleep in peace."

(The story of Islamic Imperialism, S. R. Goel p. 88)

Allauddin asked Qazi Mughisuddin regarding treatment to be met out to Hindus. The Kazi replied "They are called payers of tribute and when the revenue officer demands silver from them they should without question and with all humility and respect tender gold. If the officer throws dirt into their mouth they must without reluctance open their mouth wide to receive it. The due subordination of the Zimmi is exhibited in this humble payment and by throwing dirt into their mouth. The glorification of Islam is a duty.

To keep the Hindus in abasement is specially a religious duty because they are most inveterate enemies of the prophet and because the prophet has commanded us to slay them, plunder them and make them captive, saying convert them to Islam or kill them, enslave them and spoil their wealth and property. No doctor but the great doctor Hanifa, to whose school we belong, has assented to imposition of Jazia on Hindus Doctors of other school allow no other alternative but death or Islam. (Ziauddin Burni Illiot & Dawson)

Feroz Shah Tughlak in Fatuhat-i-Firoz Shahi—

"The Hindus had agreed to pay the money for toleration Zar-i-Zimmia and had consented to pay poll tax(Jizia)

in return for which they and their families enjoyed security. These people have now erected new idol temples in the city and in the environs in opposition to the law of the prophet which declares that such temples are not to be tolerated. Under divine guidance I destroyed these edifices, killed those leaders of infidelity who seduced others into error and lower orders. I subjected to stripes and chastisement until this abuse was entirely abolished. The following is an instance.

In the village of Maluh there is a tank which they call 'Kund'. Here they had built idol temples and on certain days the Hindus were accustomed to proceed thither on horse back and wearing arms; their women and children also went out in Palakins and carts. When intelligence of this came to my ears, my religious feelings prompted me to put a stop to this scandle and offence to the religion of Islam. On the day of assembly I went there in person and ordered that leaders of these people and promoters of this abomination should be put to death. I destroyed their idol temples and instead thereof raised mosques." Story of Islamic Imperialism in India S. R Goel)

Muslim leader Ahmad Sirhindi (1564–1624) propogated—

"The honour of Islam lies in insulting Kufr and

Kafirs. One who respects the Kafirs dishonours the Muslims. The Real puspose of levying Jizia on them (Hindus) is to humiliate them to such an extent that they may not dress well and live in grandeur. They should constantly remain terrified and trembling It is intended to hold them under contempt and to uphold the honour and might of Islam"

(Maktubat—Letter no. 163)

Cow sacrifice in India is the noblest of Islamic practices. The Kafirs (Hindus) may probably agree to pay Jizia but they will not concede to cow sacrifice." (Maktubat Letter no. 81)

Aurangzeb was at the top of them all. He perpetrated all sort of cruelities and heaped all insults and indignities on Hindus in order to crush them. But he was repentent in his death bed for his communal frenzy and doubted very much whether sword as key to heaven was the will of God or it was his personal ambition which impelled him to kill in the name of Allah and his religion.

His elder brother Dara Shikoh was a very learned man. In his persian writings he wrote—"

"After gradual research, I have come to the conclusion that long before all heavenly books like Koran, the old Testament, and the New Testament etc. God had revealed to the Hindus through the Rishis of yore, of whom Brahma was the Chief his four books of knowledge; the Rigved, The Yajurveda, the Samveda and the Atharved."

He had equal respect for temples and mosques. He presented a

stone railing to the temple of Keshav Rai in Mathura.

SRI KRISHNA JANMASTHAN

On 14th October 1666 learning that their was a stone railing in the temple Keshav Rai which Dara Shikoh had presented to it, Aurangzeb ordered it to be removed, and finally in Jan. 1670 his zeal stimulated by the pious meditation of Ramzan led him to send forth cammands to destroy the temple altogether and to change the name of the city to Islamabad. xxx

And in the 12th year of his reign (9th April 1669) he issued a general order to demolish all the schools and temples of the infidels and put down their religious teachings and practices. (History of Aurangzeb J. N. Sarkar)

An assessment of this dark period in the history was made by Sri Jadunath Sarkar as given below—

"The demolition of the Chief temple in the captured city and erection of a mosque in its site was an invariable incident of a muslim conquest. With the growth of the Muslim populatien, and the long enjoyment of unchallenged power bred in them a spirit of intolerance and love of persecution. Every devise short of massacre in cold blood was resorted to in ordet to convert the heathen subjects. Rewards in the form of money and public employment were offered to apostates from Hinduism and the leaders of the Hindu religion and the society were systematically opressed to deprive the sect of spiritual instruction; and their religious gatherings and processions were forbidden in order to prevent the growth of the solidarity and a sense of communal strength among them. No new temple was allowed to be built nor any old one to be repaired, so that the total disappeance of all places of

Hindu worship was to be merely a question of time. The destruction of temples and the slaughter of the Hindus sanctified every war of agression. Thus a frame of mind was produced in Muslim community which habitually regarded plunder and homicide as the purest of human acts, "excursion in the path of God" (or Jehad) The murder af iufidels (Kafir Kushi) is counted as a merit in a Muslim."

(J. N. Sarkar History of Aurangzeb Vol, II)

Babur was no different. He abused Hindus Calling them 'Abject and mean' and was delighted to see the 'hills of their dead bodies' and 'the fount of running blood.' He writes—

All the Hindus slain Abject and mean
By matchlock stones like the elephant lords
Many hills of their bodies were seen
And from each hill a fount of running blood
Dreading the arrows of our splended ranks
Passed they in flight to each wase and hill
For love of faith I became wanderer in the Desert
I became antagonist of pagans & Hindus.
I strove myself to be a martyr
Thanks to the Almighty who made me Ghazi.

Memoirs of Babur
Vol. 3 p. 573

THESE ARE SOME GRIM FACTS OF HISTORY WHICH CANNOT BE OVERLOOKED.

Mosques constructed forcibly on usurped temples are irksome Reminders of Turkish Barbarism

If Attila the Hun was the scourage of Europe, the Turkish predators were no less a scourge for India. It is a coincidence that they had adopted Islam and used it as an instrument for their barbaric predations. If the Europeans can condemn the Hun outrage, it is inexplicable why anyone should take umbrage when Indians codemn the barbarism perpetrated by these foreign invaders.

The Babri Masjid at Ayodhya as also the Shahjuran-ka-Tila there, the Aurangzebi mosques at Mathura and Varanasi, and the Adhai-din-ka-Jhopra at Ajmer are all irksome reminders of Turkish barbarism; and if that barbarism was perpetrated in the name of Islam so much the worse for it. No Indian worth his salt can take pride in these monuments of vandalism outdoing the worst depredations of the Huns.

Ram Jaumabhoomi at Ayodhya has the same, if not greater significance for the Hindus as Kaba or Al-Aqsa mosque or Hazratbal Sahib have for the Muslims. Hindus condsider Ram as an incarnation of god and worship him as such. It was barbarous of Babur to have desecrated and demolished the temple which stood at the site of Ram's birth and to have tried to put up a mosque there. The Hindus could never reconcile themsalves to this act of the invader and offered unrelenting resistance and in the process untold numbers of them lost their lives. But then the mosque could never be completed. They could only construct a dome over a temple pillars which are intact even to this day. The minaret from which the muezzin cries out the 'azan' five times a day is conspicuous by its absence. It will thus be seen that it never became a full-fledged mosque. No congregational prayers were being held there and it has no 'mutwalli.'

While the Babri mosque has no special significance for the Muslims, Ram Janmabhoomi is a place of sacred pilgrimage for the Hindus. It has immense religious significance for them and their emotional and sentimental attachment to it is unfathomably deep.

(Northern India Patrika 5.3.1987) V. N. Jindal

The Historians and scholars are agreed basically that :—

(1) The place hallowed as Rama-Janma-Bhumi is the same one where the Babri Masjid stands;

(2) The Masjid came on the spot at the hands of Mir Baqi Tashkandi (a subordinate of Babur), statedly at the command of the Emperor in 1528 A.D , followlng his visit to the Avadh region;

(3) Babur Nama, as it has come down to us, in published versions, despite its otherwise meticulous way of documentation of the details of his life, does not make any reference to the 'Babri Masjid' construction by Mir Baqi';

(4) From 1528 to 1855, the related recods in the area of Ayodhya. are silent on whether any prayer by muslims in the Mosque was going on; and indicate that worship at Rama Janma Bhumi has been continuing. There is also mention in some of the records of the demolition of a temple at this place;

(5) After 1855, political developments have resulted in the conflict among the Hindus and Muslims, on this 'Babri Masjid' site: and in this period, the judicial pronouncement of 1885 though accepting the legtimacy of the Rama-Janmabhumi prevented Hindus from building any temple on Rama-Janmabhumi site. Later, after 1947, upto recent years, the case on the Rama-Janma Bhumi site is still in the Court;

(6) Archaeological features at this excavated site, close to Rama Janma Bhumi, show that there was a pre-existing foundational plinth base below the Mosque's structure; that the polished black stone pillars inside are all of a temple of the 12th Century A.D., in style, and careful sculptural workmanship, and are found re-used in the construction of the Mosque; that the Mosque was using red sand stone veneering on the plain outer walls, and has also no outstanding customary features of a Mosque of a contemporary or regional style, in the form of Minars, Dome type etc.; and the dome itself, together with the constructional style of the Mosque, was inaesthetic, in poor local craftsmanship and execution, except for the re-used pillars and wall-niches of a temple inside the Mosque.

मस्जिदें जो धार्मिक़ गुलामी के चिन्ह हैं

२७ जुलाई १९१७ के नवजीवन में प्रकाशित गांधी जी का पत्र–

मुझ से अयोध्या के एक भाई ने पत्र लिखकर श्रीराम जन्म भूमि के सम्बन्ध में पूछा है। इस के बारे में अपना दृष्टिकोण लिख रहा हूं।

"किसी भी धार्मिक उपासना गृह के ऊपर बलात्कारपूर्वक अधिकार करना बड़ा जघन्य पाप है। मुगलकालीन समय में धर्मान्धता के कारण मुगल शासकों ने बहुत से हिन्दुओं के इन धार्मिक स्थानों पर कब्जा कर लिया था जो हिन्दूओं के पवित्र आराधना स्थल थे। जिनमें से बहुत से लूटपाट कर नष्ट भ्रष्ट कर दिये गये, बहुतों को मस्जिद का रूप दे दिया गया। यद्यपि मन्दिर और मस्जिद यह दोनों ही भगवान की उपासना के पवित्र स्थान है और दोनों में कोई भेद नहीं है तथापि हिन्दू और मुसलमान दोनों की उपासना परम्परा अलग-अलग हैं।

धार्मिक दृष्टिकोण से एक मुसलमान यह कभी बरदास्त नहीं कर सकता कि उसकी मस्जिद में. जिसमें वह बराबर विधि की इबादत करता चला आ रहा है कोई हिन्दू उसमें बुत ले जाकर धर दे। इसी तरह एक हिन्दू भी कभी यह सहन नहीं करेगा कि उसके उस मन्दिर में, जहां वह बराबर राम, कृष्ण, शंकर, विष्णु और देवी की उपासना करता चला आ रहा है कोई उसे तोड़कर मस्जिद बना दे। जहां पर ऐसे कांड हुए हैं वास्तव में ये चिन्ह धार्मिक गुलामी के हैं। हिन्दू मुसलमान दोनों को चाहिए कि ऐसी जगहों पर जहां इस तरह के झगड़े हों आपस में तै कर लें। मुसलमानों के वे पूजा-स्थल, जो हिन्दुओं के अधिकार में हैं, हिन्दू उन्हें उदारतापूर्वक मुसलमानों को लौटा दें, इसी तरह हिन्दुओं के जो धार्मिक स्थल मुसलमानों के कब्जे में हैं इन्हें खुशी-खुशी हिन्दुओं को सौंप दें। इससे आपसी भेदभाव नष्ट होगा, हिन्दू मुसलमानों में आपस में एकता की वृद्धि होगी, जो भारत जैसे धर्म प्रधान देश के लिए वरदान सिद्ध होगी।

एम० के० गांधी